

MEETING MINUTES

March 31, 2009

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Bruce Lewis called the meeting to order at 6:10 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ROLL CALL

Present: Commissioners Todd Baker, Bruce Lewis, Michelle Ramirez

Absent: Jeremy Dirks

Also Present: Executive Secretary Clayton Lee

VERIFICATION OF AGENDA POSTING

Executive Secretary Lee informed the Commission that the agenda for the March 31, 2009 meeting of the Parks and Recreation Commission was posted at both the Hollister Community Center and City Hall on March 24, 2009 per Government Code Section 54954.5.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Ramirez made a motion to approve the minutes of the February 24, 2009 Parks and Recreation Commission meeting. Second by Commissioner Baker. Motion passed 3-0, with Commissioner Dirks absent.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Israel Godoy gave an update on the YMCA Roller Hockey program of which he is associated. The program is currently offering services to between 18 to 20 youth. Much of the equipment was donated by the San Jose Sharks through one of their community programs. Mr. Godoy also wanted to inform the Commission that the San Jose Sharks will be bringing their mobile Shark Tank to Hollister on Saturday April 25, 2009 for the YMCA's Healthy Kids Day. There will be a match earlier in the day at Vets Park and then the mobile Shark Tank will be available on Fifth Street at 10 a.m. for a roller hockey clinic as part of the YMCA event. The San Jose Sharks will have their facility in front of the YMCA until 1 p.m. that day.

OLD BUSINESS

1. **Development of a Dog Park in Hollister** – Executive Secretary Lee provided the Commission and audience of approximately 30 citizens an overview of the discussions that have taken place so far at the Parks and Recreation Commission level. Lee stated that the Hollister Dog Owners Group (HDOG) had come to the staff and Commission with interest in developing a formal dog park in Hollister. HDOG is a non-profit organization comprised of dog owners in the Hollister area. Staff had initially looked at

the potential of several parks in Hollister including Frank Klauer Park in the Sunnyslope Village subdivision. Since the fenced storm water detention basin at Frank Klauer Park was already being used “informally” as a dog park, staff and the Commission discussed this as a possible location. The Commission expressed concerns about the impact to the existing neighborhood and directed staff to conduct a survey. Executive Secretary Lee informed the Commission that approximately 475 direct mailings to residents in the Sunnyslope Village subdivision and some of the surrounding areas were sent out several weeks prior to this meeting. The letter informed the residents generally of the concept of a dog park at Frank Klauer Park and also informed them of the Commission meeting at which they could provide their comments regarding the possibility of a dog park. It was very clear that this meeting was for input and that no decisions were to be made. Executive Secretary Lee also provided a short survey at the bottom of the letter that could be removed and returned to staff. He also provided an email address and phone number for residents to respond. Lee indicated that 22 letters were returned undeliverable and that about 42 residents had responded (including those received at the meeting) either by mail or email. This represented about a 9% response to the survey. Of those that responded, 27 (or 64%) were in favor and 15 (or 36%) were opposed to a dog park being constructed at Klauer Park. Lee provided copies to the attendees of a summary of the responses received.

The Commission then received public input. Edward Smith, of 1981 Poplar Court in Hollister, stated that he has lived across the street from Klauer Park since the subdivision was constructed. He stated that he was taking a neutral position, but shared some of the experiences that he and his family have encountered over the years with dogs and their owners. He also expressed his concern about losing the ability for his family to use the open space if it became a dog park. He also expressed his concerns about irresponsible dog owners and safety of the general public.

Steve Indrelunas, 1020 Hickory Court in Hollister, spoke in support of a dog park at the current location or somewhere else in Hollister. He expressed how he and his wife travel with their dog and use dog parks in other communities regularly. He stated that he would recommend a dog park that is segregated by large and small dogs by having separately fenced areas, has structured rules for those using the park, and adequate enforcement of the rules so as to be a good neighbor with the property owners in the area.

George Tombe, 1777 Sunnyslope Lane in Hollister, spoke in favor of a dog park at this location. He stated that he is a user of this and other dog parks. He informed the Commission that rules are usually enforced on the honor system and most problems with the dogs occur when a dog is not spay or neutered or if a dog is in heat. He encouraged the Commission to also look for other locations in addition to Klauer Park because there will be a need for additional dog parks as the community grows. He also shared that

when he travels, he is able to observe other dog parks and suggested that the park be divided into larger and smaller dog areas, have closed containers for dog droppings and that the dogs should be brought into the park on leash and then released in the gated area.

Chairperson Bruce Lewis explained that he is a dog owner and that he was actually missing his puppy's obedience class graduation this evening. He informed the audience that he and Commissioner Baker visited about 16 homes on March 30, 2009 to further get input from and inform the neighbors of the dog park discussion. Of the 16 homes, they were able to speak with 12 residents. Some of the comments that they received included the disturbance of residents by someone using a whistle in the early mornings for dog training, the issue related to cleaning up after their animals, children being at risk if dogs get out, health issues related to the dog droppings, how some non-dog owners have felt like they needed to leave the park if they were using the "informal dog park" when nobody was around and then dogs and their owners appear, and general consideration for families wanting to use the park.

Tammy Ballew of Hollister, introduced herself and thanked the Commission for the opportunity to speak. She informed the Commission that she and a handful of others formed the HDOG organization. She spoke in response to a number of the questions that were raised by those with concerns regarding a dog park being located at Klauer Park. She stated that Klauer Park was not the group's first choice for location and that they had looked at other areas, some not owned by the City. Ms. Ballew has met with the City Planning Department and the City Attorney in addition to the City staff in attendance this evening. She also went before the County Parks and Recreation Commission to present her ideas. Originally they were looking for 2 to 3 acres. They would propose defined park hours of operation, specific posted use rules, age requirements for handling dogs or being in the dog park area, construction of a double gated "Sally Port", use of volunteers or ambassadors to help with enforcement, obtaining donated benches and dog bag dispensers, improved landscaping with trees for shade and the need for potable water for the dogs. She also cited the California Code section that makes dog owners liable for the actions of their animals.

Other comments that were brought up from the audience were concerns regarding enforcement of rules, noise, general maintenance and the concern from a resident that stated when they moved into the neighborhood they knew there was a park, but didn't anticipate that it would become a dog park.

Chairperson Lewis thanked the audience for attending and restated that there would be no decisions made this evening and the purpose of the meeting was to obtain feedback from the residents. Lewis stated that the Commission would like to move forward with some recommendation within the next several Commission meetings. Executive Secretary Lee

informed the audience that this topic would be agendaized again for the April 28, 2009 Parks and Recreation Commission meeting to be held at City Hall at 6 p.m.

2. **Master Plan for Vista Park Hill** – Executive Secretary Lee informed the Commission that the second community workshop for the Vista Park Hill Master Plan was conducted on March 24, 2009 by SSA Landscape Architects, Inc., the consultants for the project. There was another good turnout of about 25 residents and staff that attended. SSA Landscape Architects presented the revised conceptual plan, took public comment, and worked to achieve general consensus on the layout of the plan. Staff was pleased with the apparent cooperation between the various individuals and groups that were represented at the meeting. There may be one more community meeting and then possibly the project will be taken to the Planning Commission before it is recommended to the City Council for adoption. Staff will update the Commission as more information is received from SSA staff.
3. **Brigantino/Riverside Park Development Project**– City Engineer Steve Wittry provided the Commission with a summary of activities at the Brigantino/Riverside Park project. Wittry stated that the first reclaimed water was used on March 30, 2009 when testing the system. The general contractor, Perma Green, will begin seeding of the grass within 10 days or so. It is anticipated that the turf will be ready for use in mid to late July 2009. Staff will keep the Commission posted with updates as the project progresses.
4. **Update on Roberti-Z’Berg’Harris Grant** – City Engineer Steve Wittry provided the Commission with a summary of the status of the Roberti-Z’Berg-Harris (RZH) grant. As was reported at the last meeting, state funded projects from “pooled cash” are still on hold. The RZH grant does not look real positive right now as the state is non-committal on the \$500,000 for the project, which is to be matched by the City’s \$500,000. The original deadline is June 30, 2009 and the state legislature has yet to come up with an extension to this deadline. State Parks and Recreation Department staff is unsure as to what changes will occur to the program due to the current budget crisis the State of California is experiencing. Staff will keep the Commission posted as more information is received.
5. **2009 California and Pacific Southwest Recreation and Park Training Conference** – Commissioner Baker gave a summary of his attendance at the 2009 California and Pacific Southwest Recreation and Park Training Conference held in Santa Clara on March 4 – 6, 2009. He stated that he attended several of the workshops and found them helpful and that the vendors show was interesting. Executive Secretary Lee also attended and summarized the workshops that he attended. It is a great opportunity to network with other Commissioners and staff members from throughout the state. Next years event will

be in Palm Springs in March 2010. Commissioner Baker stated that it would be good for various Commissioners to attend to experience the event.

6. **2009 CPRS District VI Awards and Installation Dinner** – Commissioner Baker informed the Commission that he and his wife and Executive Secretary Lee attended the annual CPRS District VI Awards and Installation Dinner in Watsonville on Friday March 20, 2009. He said it was a good event for networking with other cities and to see what they are doing in their communities. Commissioner Baker informed the Commission that awards were presented to a number of communities recognizing both individual and group volunteer efforts in parks and recreation in the tri county area. He also said the food was well prepared and more Commissioners should attend the local event next year. Chairperson Lewis asked that the Commission be reminded several months in advance of next years event so that we can nominate someone or an organization for their efforts.

NEW BUSINESS

1. **Park of the Month** - Executive Secretary Lee provided the Commission with a tentative schedule for the Commission's recommended Park of the Month program. The Commission will visit one or several parks or recreation facilities during each month of the year and report back at the next Commission meeting with their observations or comments. The purpose of this program is to give feedback to staff on the Commission's observations and for the Commission to familiarize themselves with the facilities. There were a few recommended changes that Lee will make and send out to the Commission via email. The first park on the amended list will be Vista Park Hill which will be discussed at the April 28, 2009 meeting.
2. **County of San Benito Parks Master Plan** – Executive Secretary Lee informed the Commission that he had attended the most recent County Parks and Recreation Commission meeting at which the Parks Master Plan status was reviewed. Lee provided the Commission with a copy of the draft plan and executive summary, and gave a brief update on discussion that took place at the County monthly meeting on March 23, 2009.
3. **California Integrated Waste Management Board (CIWMB) Grant** – Executive Secretary Lee informed the Commission that he had recently received word from the CIWMB staff that the City of Hollister had been awarded one of the Tire Derived Product (TDP) Grant Program grants for use of recycled tire materials in California. This was a competitive program that was available to all governmental agencies, educational institutions and non-profits in the state. Lee reported that staff had taken the project application to the City Council at the end of last year for approval to submit the grant. The grant award is for \$149,364 to replace existing sand and bark under playground equipment with recycled tire materials for fall arrest in 6 of the City parks. Lee said the project is scheduled to be completed by the end of 2009 or early 2010. Lee recognized

Charlene Hannibal from his staff and Cameron Wright of West Coast Tire for their efforts in assisting with the grant submittal.

REPORTS

1. **Recreation Program Review** – This item was tabled.
2. **Parks Division Review** – The Commission received an overview of the activities of the Parks Division for February 2009. In addition, Executive Secretary Lee informed the Commission that staff was getting proposals for repairs and replacement of damaged fencing at the skate park. Also Lee stated that staff was working to resolve the Marne Drive access to Veteran's Memorial Park issue. Staff also addressed a question regarding the Vista Park Hill cellular tower landscaping. Airport and Code Enforcement Director Mike Chembless addressed general maintenance at the Airport Park. He also suggested that the Commission consider the Airport Park as a possible location for the dog park. He stated that it would benefit the airport and does not have some of the surrounding residential issues that Klauer Park seems to have. Staff said they would look into the site as a possible location for a dog park and would report back at the April Commission meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Parks and Recreation Commission, Commissioner Ramirez made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:15 p.m. Second by Commissioner Baker. Motion passed 3-0, with Commissioner Dirks absent.

The next regular meeting of the Parks and Recreation Commission will be held on April 28, 2009 at 6:00 p.m. at City Hall.

Respectfully Submitted,

Clayton Lee, Executive Secretary
Parks and Recreation Commission